

SALMON CREEK INTERCHANGE PROJECT

A joint project by the Clark County Public Works Department and the Washington State Department of Transportation

Newsletter #1

June 2005

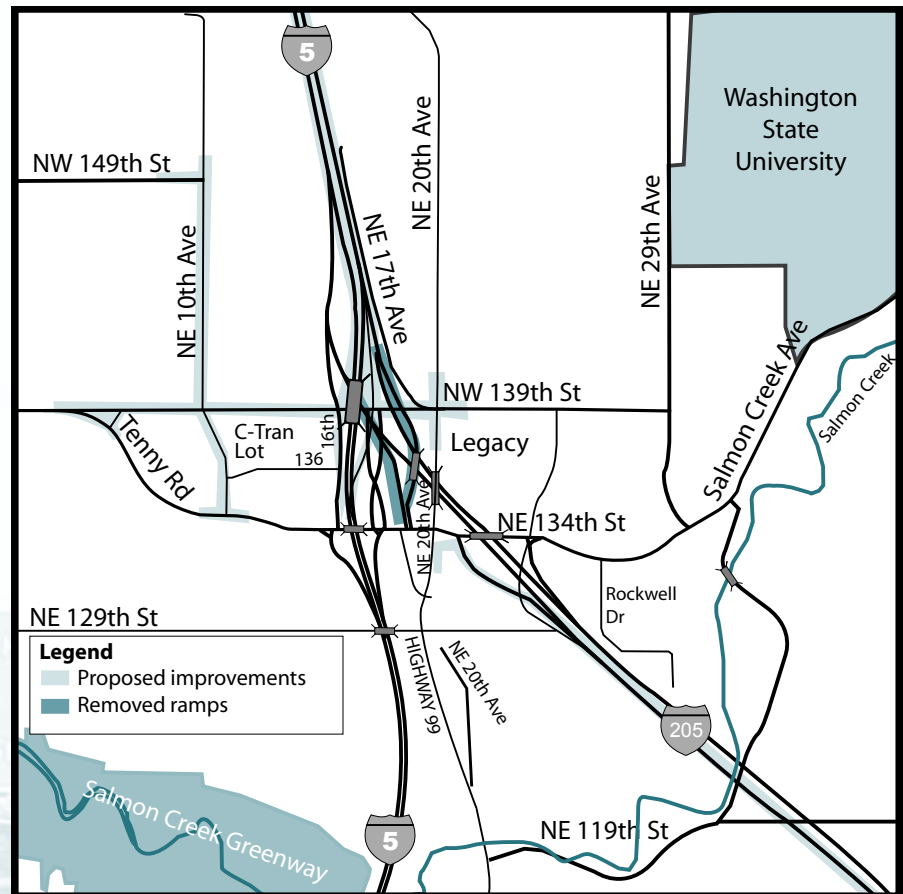
The Clark County Public Works Department and the Washington State Department of Transportation are working together to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety in the fast-growing Salmon Creek area. The population in Salmon Creek has grown significantly with housing, retail, office space, a hospital, and a college campus replacing what used to be farms and open space.

Today, N.E. 134th Street is used by all local east-west traffic across I-5 and I-205, and provides access to both freeways from the Salmon Creek area. The close proximity of traffic signals on N.E. 134th Street and high traffic volumes in the area create gridlock, long delays, traffic backups, and a high rate of accidents.

The project includes:

- a new connection at N.E. 139th Street between N.E. 10th Avenue and N.E. 20th Avenue
- redesigned access to I-205 from N.E. 134th Street
- a new full interchange at I-5 and N.E. 139th Street
- widening N.E. 10th Avenue from N.E. 134th Street to N.E. 149th Street

These improvements will relieve congestion, improve mobility, and improve safety for surrounding neighborhoods and the county.



The major improvements that comprise the Salmon Creek Interchange Project—the changes to freeway access and the N.E. 139th Street connection—have been considered in other planning processes such as the Salmon Creek/Fairgrounds Regional Road Plan and the I-5/I-205 North Corridor Study. The analysis and input received during these studies provided the starting point for evaluating preliminary alternatives for the project.

The foundation for the proposed project improvements were shared with community members during those planning processes as well as during the 2002 Access Point Decision process that considered changes to freeway access. Since 2002, the Washington State Department of Transportation and Clark County have held two community open houses to share design ideas and gather feedback as the designs evolved.

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Project status

The project team is beginning an environmental assessment for the project, which is a process required by the federal government that complies with the National Environmental Quality Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

Some topics covered in the environmental assessment include:

- the natural environment such as wetlands, wildlife, and water quality
- historic and cultural resources
- traffic operations and community connectivity
- noise impacts and right-of-way acquisition

Once the environmental assessment is complete, it will be presented to the public, and federal and local agencies for review and comment. After this comment period ends, the project team will respond to the comments received and make any necessary revisions to the environmental assessment. Final design, permitting, and construction of the Salmon Creek Interchange Project will proceed once this federal environmental review process is complete.

The project team is also preparing a revision to the 2002 Access Point Decision Report to document the rationale for modifying freeway access in this area. A revised report will be prepared because the design of the Salmon Creek Interchange Project has changed since the original report

was approved in 2002. The original Access Point Decision Report studied a full interchange at N.E. 134th Street and high occupancy vehicle ramps to and from I-5 at N.E. 139th Street. The Federal Highway Administration will review the revised report and decide if permission should be granted to change the highway access and interchanges.

Project alternatives to be studied in the environmental assessment

The environmental assessment will include a build alternative and a no-build alternative. The analysis for both alternatives will assume the same expected growth in housing and employment over the next 20 years, given current zoning. The difference between the build and the no-build alternatives are the potential affects that the Salmon Creek Interchange Project improvements may have on the natural and built environment.

- The build alternative considers what the area would look like in 20 years if the proposed project is constructed (described below).
- The no-build alternative considers what the area would look like in 20 years if the proposed project is not constructed.

Build alternative

The build alternative includes improvements to the interstate system as well as improvements to local roads in the area.

Freeway improvements

The build alternative will:

- construct an interchange at I-5 and N.E. 139th Street that provides full access in all directions
- remove the off-ramp from I-205 northbound to N.E. 134th Street and the on-ramp from N.E. 134th Street to I-205 northbound
- construct a new northbound lane on I-5 from N.E. 139th Street to



The view from I-205 looking northwest toward NE 134th Street and the area where I-5 and I-205 merge in Salmon Creek.



N.E. 179th Street to accommodate the new ramps

- construct a new I-205 southbound bridge over I-5 and N.E. 139th Street
- construct a new I-205 northbound bridge over N.E. 139th Street
- construct a new on-ramp from N.E. 134th Street to I-205 southbound

Local road improvements

The build alternative will:

- construct a new segment of N.E. 139th Street from N.E. 10th Avenue to N.E. 20th Avenue that passes under I-5 and I-205

- widen N.E. 139th Street to two lanes in each direction with bike lanes, sidewalks, and a raised median from N.E. Tenny Road to the Legacy Hospital driveway
- redesign the intersection of N.E. 139th Street and N.E. Tenny Road to a “T” configuration with N.E. 139th Street being the main through route
- install new traffic signals at the intersections of N.E. 139th Street at N.E. 10th Avenue and N.E. 139th Street at N.E. Tenny Road
- widen N.E. 10th Avenue between N.E. 134th Street and N.E. 149th Street to one lane in each direction with a center turn lane, bike lanes, and sidewalks
- reconstruct the intersection of N.E. 10th Avenue at N.E. 149th Street
- modify the traffic signal and intersection on N.E. 134th Street at N.E. 10th Avenue to accommodate other changes in the area and truck turning movements

- improve the intersection of N.E. 20th Avenue at N.E. 139th Street with double left turn lanes and right turn lanes from N.E. 20th Avenue to N.E. 139th Street in both directions

For more information or to ask questions about the Salmon Creek Interchange Project, please call Kristin Hull, project public involvement coordinator, toll-free at 1-877-624-7196, send e-mail to info@salmoncreekinterchange.org

Visit our Web site at www.salmoncreekinterchange.org for project updates.



This view looks south to the Salmon Creek area where the new N.E. 139th Street interchange will be located.

Project Timeline

Spring 2005	WSDOT and Clark County begin work on the environmental assessment and revised Access Point Decision Report. Kick-off open house held.
Spring 2006	Environmental assessment and revised Access Point Decision Report are completed. Public and agency stakeholders review and provide comments.
Summer 2006	Environmental assessment and Access Point Decision Report are revised based on comments.
Fall 2006	Final design begins.
Spring 2008	Construction begins if funding is secured.
Summer 2013	Construction is completed.

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SALMON CREEK INTERCHANGE PROJECT OPEN HOUSE

5-8 P.M. Wednesday, June 22, 2005

Student Services Building Room 130, WSU Vancouver

14204 N.E. Salmon Creek Avenue, Vancouver

The open house is your opportunity to:

- learn about other alternatives that have been considered and suggest anything that has been overlooked
- review the proposed project alternative and make suggestions about what should be studied during the environmental assessment
- learn about the environmental assessment process
- find out how to stay involved as the project moves forward

Free parking available after 5 P.M. in Red Lot 3. Directions to WSU Vancouver and a campus map are available at www.vancouver.wsu.edu/ca/location.htm

For more information, please call Kristin Hull, project public involvement coordinator, toll-free at 1-877-624-7196.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations may request written materials in alternate formats, sign language interpreters, physical accessibility accommodations, or other reasonable accommodation by contacting the event sponsor (Jilayne Jordan, (360) 905-2078), usually one week before meeting's date, June 22, 2005. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may call the Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service, or Tele-Braille at 7-1-1, Voice 1-800-833-6384, and ask to be connected to the event sponsor's phone number.

Title VI Statement to Public: It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin and sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For Title VI complaint forms and advice, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098